The Scarlet Oak

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THE SCARLET OAK

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

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THE

SCARLET OAK.

SCARLET OAK.

JUST on the verge of winter storms and cold,
Throwing warm brightness round the autumn day
Which touches tenderly each graceful spray ;
In beauties marvelous and manifold—
Inwrapped in flame like martyr saints of old,
Yet all erect and fearless of decay—
When other trees are quite bereft and gray—
These Scarlet Oaks reign, monarchs of the wold!
They had their flowering May ; their polish'd leaves
In summer time gave back with brightness new
The sunbeam's glance. For them the autumn weaves

A robe of scarlet, flecked with crimson hue;
Beauty and strength, touch'd with an airy grace,
Most highly favored of their favored race!

A. L. S.

THE PERSIAN CROCUS.

I.

PURE white, from hidden bulb beneath the mold
To bright and golden stamens in the bell;
Pure as the snowflake ere to earth it fell;
All pearl, except that inner hint of gold.
Just what was wrapped within the central fold
Of that dark foreign bulb I could not tell.
The purple ball had kept its secret well,
'Till suddenly it seemed to cry, "Behold!"
From the dark box, where half forgot it lay
With other bulbs that still their secret keep.
Was it because thus hidden from the ray
Of sunlight, left in gloom awhile to sleep,
That now such heavenly lights about it play
As almost make a sin-stained heart to weep?

II.

All flowers bring messages, if we will hear—
  Soft whispers, from a world we do not see.
  Some hint how "rainbows round the throne"
    may be,
Some how gold crowns for ransomed ones appear,
And some of thorns the Sinless One did wear;
  And purple dyes and crimson stains agree
  In whispering how his sorrows set us free
Who scorn and shame and death for us did bear.
And some—fair Crocus, thou art surely one—
  Come for a moment just to let us know
What robes are ready when earth's cares are done,
  For those, sin-stained and travel-worn below,
Who, washed and sanctified, through that Pure One,
Shall "walk in white" before the Eternal Throne.

J. P. B.

LENTEN FLOWERS.

IN Lenten time came Summer flowers to me:
With rose and golden hyacinths of spring,
Fair, pink azaleas whisper'd cheerily
Of rosy joys the future days might bring;
Without, the wintry wind swept lawn and lea,
But Lenten days brought summer flowers to me.

So many Lents in Life—the radiancy
Of Easter morning doth so rarely come,
I would some words of mine might fragrant be,
To one in sorrow, when these lips are dumb.
Saying, dear heart! weeping is for the *night*,
Lo, Easter hastens with its golden light!

A. L. S.

THE DIAL'S SONG.

"I Mark the Hours that Shine."

YOU may pry 'mid the wild rose entangled around me,
And peer through the storm at my weather-worn face,
But then you will leave me as wise as you found me;—
Of days that are cloudy, no record I trace;
I mark the hours that shine!

You may come when the sun through the blue sky is streaming,
And lighting my face with a glad, golden glow,
And learn from a glance at my countenance gleaming,
Just all that a sun-dial ever can show;
I mark the hours that shine!

When trial my heart is o'erclouding with sorrow,
I'll hide in the shadow my burden to bear;
No friend, though he seek, shall be able to borrow
A record of coldness, desertion or care;
I mark the hours that shine!

But come when the sunshine of Love streams about me,
And lights up my face with a glad golden glow,
And then you will know, for I cannot conceal it,
Just all that the soul-dial ever can show,
I mark the hours that shine!

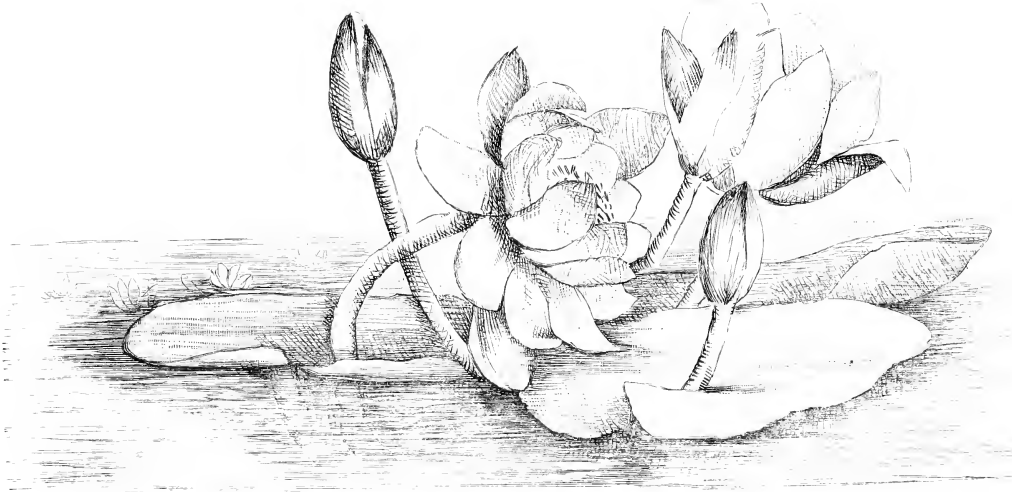
J. P. B.

POND LILIES.

OF all the blooms in Summer's coronal,
None seem so fair, so mystical, to me,
As these Pond Lilies, rising from the depths—
Mysterious in their birth and death, alike.

On the still surface of the lucid lake
How gracefully they float!—Broad leaves of green
Upbear the incense-laden chalices,
That shed rich fragrance, till the summer air
Sails freighted like some eastern Argosy.

There petals pale enfolding close their wealth,
Their hoarded wealth of choicest spicery—
Rare ivory caskets with the perfume sealed—
Or, rather, spirits white, with sweetest thoughts.
Here all enveloped in their sepals dark,
As sheathed in mortal, the immortal part—
Whilst other some, wide to the air unfold
Their blossoms fair with petals golden rayed.



When night with dusky veil and robe draws nigh,
When frightful shapes and specters stalk abroad,
Then hides the Lily in her crystal home,
Watched in her slumbers by the far-off star,
But wakens in the Morning's golden smile.

I've seen them gently fall asleep and die,
But not as roses die, whose sad decay
Shows strangely 'mid their robes of royalty;
Firmly the Lily locks her fingers white,
And should you rudely strive to loose their hold,
A flutter—and a gasp—then all is o'er!
Dead! with no curious gaze of prying eyes.

O, weave a garland of these Lily buds
For Genius, with its rare thoughts early fled,
And they shall speak to thee of Life from Death!
Unmindful of the Winter's storm and frost,
They sleep securely in the lake's dark depths,
Till Spring comes searching for them, and they rise,
To give no hint in their bright purity
Of the dim dungeons where they tarried long.

A. L. S.

A MID-DAY STAR.

DARK clouds were drifting o'er a summer sky,
Whose checkered light and gloom my gaze had won;
What little things, methought, blot out the sun!
How we grope darkly if a cloud flits by!
Then, as I watched their drifting play, afar,
A sight was given, most beautiful, most rare:
Four dark clouds met, forming a hollow square
From out whose azure center, shone a star
Bright with a luster which no cloud can mar,
Though clouds alone revealed its presence there.
Then, quickly parting, they were wafted on,
And lo, the star from out the blue was gone!
Lost to my sight, but never to my mind
The heaven-taught lesson which it left behind.

J. P. B.

THE HOURS DIE.

O life, so rich in wondrous harmonies
And signs foretokening celestial skies,
Thy priceless hours die!.
The morning hours, when robes of radiant mist,
Silver and gold, and royal amethyst
Drape the rough hills until their summits gleam
With all the beauty of an artist's dream,
When fleecy vapors rise from steep to steep,
And white birds cleave the far-off, azure deep;
The Morning hours die!

The hours die!
O life intense, O anxious, eager life!
Amid the breathless haste, amid the strife,
Thy noon-tide hours die!
Upon the brilliant sky no threat'ning cloud,
No thund'rous echoes give the warning loud,
Yet, Man, thy Present into Past doth glide,
Nor Noon's bright hours may with thee abide;

Thou on the dusty highway—they afar
Shall soar in their triumphal, fiery car;
Thy Noon-tide hours fly!

The hours die!
O "many-colored" life! O life of change,
Real and earnest, yet than dreams more strange,
Thy Sun-set hours die!
Die royally, upon a golden throne,
Bedecked with rarer gems than monarchs own,
Whilst fitfully, the deep, empurpled sea
Moans for the hours that no more shall be,
But the bright stars, assiduous courtiers, soon
Shall haste with homage to the royal moon;
The Sun-set hours die!

The hours die!
O sad and tearful life! O life of thought,
Of plans unfinished, of good dimly sought,
Thy Twilight hours die!
Ling'ring awhile around the lifeless Day,
From which the death-smile hath not passed away,
Dropping in silence sweet, refreshing tears,
And watching till the Star of Hope appears,

With their regrets and tender memories,
With their deep thoughts of never-fading skies,
The twilight hours die!

The hours die!
Mysterious life! nearing the mystic sea
Which spreads around us, vast Eternity,
Thy Midnight hours die!
So near—so near to heaven—yet these, alas,
With all their starry honors quickly pass;
As shipwrecked swimmers 'neath some chilling wave,
'Mid cold and darkness they shall find their grave;
O Man, unmindful that the sweeping surge
The finite in the infinite doth merge,
The Midnight hours die!

A. L. S.

SUNSET ON LAKE HURON.

HURON'S blue waters oped their trembling lips,
And swallowed up the round, red evening sun;
"Think he will rise again, my little one?"
I asked, as, gazing 'twixt two wandering ships
Where he had disappeared, in strange eclipse,
My little girl stood silent as a nun.
The moment's fear gave place—sweet faith was born—
"Yes, he will come again to-morrow morn,
He *always* comes to us with morning light,
No matter *where* he falls asleep at night;"
And so she clapped her hands with joy, to trace
The rosy veil upon the water's face,
Which rosier clouds, free-floating far above,
Threw down in parting token of their love.

J. P. B.

"DONA NOBIS PACEM!"

MID the soft azure of the Indian sea,*
A rainbow danced upon each crested wave,
And the blue sky, in its serenity,
Its cloudless splendor, the fair promise gave
Of Peace—sweet Peace!

When suddenly athwart the tranquil heaven
Red vapor swept like some fierce bird unbound;
Yet when by lightning our frail bark was riven,
Still rested fairest peace on all around!
Ah Peace—*false* Peace!

Oh it was hard from the rich azure light
To go with Death to the dark depths below,
Of all this lavished beauty lose the sight,
And Nature smiling calmly on such woe!
Ah Peace—false Peace!

Bathed in the golden bliss of morn, I said,
O soul rejoice, there is no cloud for thee;
Nor past upbraids, nor future dost thou dread,
All brightly tranquil as a summer's sea!
Sweet Peace—sweet Peace

His footfall lost amid the springing flowers,
We could not hear the stealthy step of Woe:
Oh, transient rapture of the early hours!
Oh, lasting anguish we were yet to know!
Ah Peace—false Peace!

Thou, thou who saidst to wind and wave, "Be still!"
When swept the tempest o'er Genneseret's lake,
The waves of sorrow own thy sovereign will,
To human suffering thou art still awake,
Give, give us Peace!

---

*For an account of this "tempest mid light" see St. Pierre in his "Studies from Nature," vol. 2.

A. L. S.

THE SPINDLE CROSS.

'TIS but the sighing of the Autumn wind,
Sweeping through heavy-laden holly boughs,
Rustling the close-leaved foliage of the yew,
Parting the boughs of the Arbutus tree,
Whose brilliant fruit no deeper scarlet shows
From out its wealth of green, and still fair flowers,
Than glows upon the traveler's guilty cheek.
He, starting at each sound, with new-born fear,
Presses with weary feet his Pilgrim way,
Man's darkest secret buried in his breast.

"In vain ye mock me with your bloody show!
What if a deeper stain my hands have known?
'Tis a short journey to the Stony Cross,
There, what is crimson shall be turned to snow!"

Then on the pilgrim speeds his weary way,
Through bog and brake and mountain passes wild;

One moment pausing, where a deep round pool,
The "Devil's Punch Bowl," mirrors back the lines
Deep-furrowed in his brow by smothered guilt.

Up the steep side of Skelig now he mounts;
With steady eye bent on its beetling crags
He threads the one lone pilgrim-beaten path,
And gains the top—a small flat floor of rock
Sloping to sea-ward, in a slender tongue
Beneath whose fearful out-look, foams the sea.
Here creeping out upon this rocky spit
He gains a cross, which, centuries gone by,
Spurred on perchance by need as dire as his,
Some hand had chiselled on the spindle's point.

Three times on the cold stone his lips are pressed,
Three times, with groans that might have melted rock,
He pours his dark confessions 'neath the cross.

Can man-devised penance aught avail?
Has the deep crimson changed to spotless snow?
* * * * * *
The wind still murmured 'mid the close-leaved yews—

Again he started! and, again the leaves
Of the Arbutus parting, he exclaimed
"Ye need not mock me with your bloody show!
What though the rugged steep be climbed in vain?
The cross return no answering kiss of peace?
Ye need not mock me with your bloody show!"

More fearful than the rustling of the yew,
The sudden plash within the awful "Bowl:"
The pitying waters parted to receive,
And, in a moment calmly slept above
The unshriven pilgrim to the Spindle Cross.

J. P. B.

"MORE LIGHT!"

The Dying Words of Goethe.

"MORE light! more light!—why fade they from my view,
The fair, bright forms to which my soul hath clung?
Have I not been to nature, loving—true,
Speaking her praises with a willing tongue?
Yet while the glory rests on flower and tree,
A dark veil hides her radiant face from me!
More light! more light!"

Ah! gifted one! whose dying words, thus spoken,
Thrill our sad souls like some lone wind-harp's moan,
Anxious we wish for an unfailing token
That thou wert not in death's dark vale alone;
Since only One, when those black shadows lower,
Can use the fiat of almighty power,
"Let there be light."

"More light! more light!"—implores the broken-hearted;

"Why live I yet beside a ruined shrine?
Why here to say, the glory hath departed?
I worshipped what was falsely fair and fine,
As the stained marble seems 'neath silver light
Of magic moonbeams, beautiful and white,
False—false—as bright!"

More light! more light!—the yearning cry of sorrow,
Which o'er some green grave bends in anguish deep;
Tell us—O, tell—will not a bright to-morrow
To us restore the lost for whom we weep?
Why have they left us in life's golden dawn?
And "do they love us yet"—the friends we mourn?
More light—more light!

By our weak, fitful lights we fondly try,
As eager through "the crypts of life" * we pore
To read the sculptured stones which the Most High
Hath finely traced with words of hidden lore;
Our lamps go out, and we are left to pray,
At length, to Him who turneth night to day,
For light—more light.

* "We walk, as it were, in the crypts of life."—LONGFELLOW.

A. L. S.

TO-DAY.

"'Tis the measure of a man—his apprehension of a day."—EMERSON.

AS mountain meres reflect the purple heights,
And rosy tints of morn, and evening sky,
So, on this azure day, fall changing lights
And solemn shadows from eternity!
Not isolated is this fair To-Day—
'Tis filled and fed from the o'erflowing past,
The while its silver streamlet steals away
Into a sea unfathomable and vast.

This man, whom angels watch with eagerness,
Regardless of the loving angels' care,
Regardless of Almighty power to bless,
Regardless of the subtle tempter's snare,
Saith to himself, "a little slumber" still,
"A little folding of the hands to sleep—
Soul, take thine ease!"—Oh, hard of heart, of will
Perverse, awake! and for thy lost days weep!

Move thoughtfully, my soul! lest some calm day
Christ near thee walking thou shalt not perceive
Till he, unwelcomed, vanish from thy way!
And thou, to-morrow, o'er thy blindness grieve.
Let each day be the Lord's Day, until light
Shall shine upon thee, where is no more night.

A. L. S.

WORLD WITHOUT END.

IS. XLV. : 17.

WORLD without end!
Is it where blossoms open, fade, and fall,
While sun and dew yet plead with mournful call?
Is it where sparkling fountains cease to play—
Where beds of wasted rivers cross our way?

World without end!
Is it where islands sink beneath the main?
Where bowing hills become a weary plain?
Where mountains by the roots are overturned,
Rolled from the rocks, and in His anger burned?

World without end!
Is it where proudest cities lie a waste;
To build whose walls the "sons of strangers" haste?
Where fretting waters leap and laugh to scorn
The prostrate marble of the centuries born?

World without end!
Is it where monarchs at a touch turn pale
And pass alone into the silent vale?
Where rulers faint, where statesmen drop from sight—
And all are hidden in swift coming night?

World without end!
Is it where like a simple parchment scroll
The very heavens together He shall roll?
Where suns are darkened, moons to blood are turned,
With fervent heat the elements are burned?

World without end!
Where is it? Who can find so strange a land?
Where the foundations evermore shall stand?
Where change is kept forever from the door?
Where hope shall cheat the trusting ones, no more?

World without end!
Where rosy morning ne'er shall yield to night,
Where perfect blossoms never know a blight?
Where silence never takes her solemn seat,
Forbidding sundered souls with joy to meet?

World without end!
Look up, ye seekers for a world like this,
For, just before you lies the realm of bliss.
The little child you to your bosom pressed,
Perchance is now in that fair world a guest;
The aged mother, bowed beneath the load
Of grief and care along the weary road,
Has seen the golden hinges swiftly turned,
And, entering, all its hidden glory learned.

World without end!
Each pilgrim, weary of a changing life,
Who ceases battling with its constant strife;—
Who turns to Him by whom all things are made,
Shall *never* be confounded nor afraid!
Let sun and dew quick withering flowers bewail,
Let cities crumble, and let monarchs fail,
Let mountains vanish, systems pass away—
Let change and sorrow have a moment's sway,
If, beyond these, an everlasting Friend
Shall hold our bliss secure—*world without end.*

J. P. B.

"MANY THINGS ARE GROWING CLEAR."

—*Schiller.*

COME! the summer night is calling,
Through the elm-tree shadows falling,
And the silver moonbeams gleaming,
On the snowy window-screen.
These but *hints*, I murmur lowly,
And I raise the curtain slowly,
Till a flood of splendor streaming
Renders *clear* the enchanted scene.

Soul! all Nature calleth to thee,
From the bounds of earth would woo thee;
Morn, with fragrant breezes blowing
Fresh from the celestial hills;
Eve in purple robes of glory
Sweetly tells her mystic story,
Such diviner state foreshowing
That the soul with rapture thrills.

Take, oh take these sweet suggestions,
Ask no unbelieving questions;
Wafting thee to fields Elysian
Death shall surely raise the screen;
With celestial Euphrasy
He shall touch the inner eye,
Till thou chant with raptured vision
"Many things are clearly seen!"

Thus said Schiller, in his gladness,
While each bowed the head in sadness
Round his dying couch at even,
Closed his eyes on scenes once dear;
On the flood of crimson glory
Bathing rock and castle hoary;
Yet while earthly ties were riven
Many things were growing clear.

Sweeter than the carols ringing
Whilst the lark her flight is winging,
Are these words of Schiller, ever
Singing, singing through the soul,
Prelude of diviner pleasures
Where no more in mournful measures

Sing the souls who sorrow never,
Who have safely reached the goal.

What though chilling mists enshroud us,
When these vapors that becloud us,
Gazed upon from hights celestial
Golden "mirrors" shall appear;
Courage! then, nor wish to alter
One of God's decrees, nor falter
Through the fear of ills terrestrial;
Many things are growing clear!

A. L. S.

FLOWERS AND MOSSES FROM STONEHENGE.

MOSSES from Stonehenge and bright golden flowers,
Fair graceful "lady's fingers," how in tones
Of awe you whisper of those old old stones,
Defying Time with all his boasted powers
To tell what Century your birthday owns!
You drew your life from no fresh rosy bowers!
These grasses, silvery-green, breathed out 'neath showers
That beat the Altar-Stone their unheard moans:—
The *Altar-Stone*, sunlit but once a year,
Yet shared with these its precious glint of gold.
And hearts that live through shadows long and drear,
Oft from their passing light-gleams some ray spare
To those who chance their darkened way to share,
For Love through light and shadow will enfold!

J. P. B.

[The Altar Stone now lies in such a position that the sun strikes it but once a year.]

MARCH.

CAPRICIOUS March! oft passionate and wild;
Stormy as Hera when opposing Jove;
Who, in dark midnight, through thy realms shall rove,
May hear strange voices that his spirit stir,
As the last cry of shipwreck'd mariner!
Art never into tenderness beguiled,
Thou, whose fierce moods proclaim thee, Winter's child?

Yes, Hera had her bright days, and could smile,
And sip from nectar'd cup, with brow serene;
So when, some sunny morn, through woodland screen,
On swelling buds looks the soft azure sky,
A gracious Presence sweeps benignly by,
And cheerful sounds ring out through forest aisle,
While March to pleasing dreams the soul doth wile.

The early squirrels run a merry race;
The ready blue-bird hears her call and sings;
The starlings flock around with scarlet wings,
While blue Hepaticas ope gentle eyes;
Arbutus flushes with a glad surprise
When seeing through the leafy hiding-place
Bright March bend o'er her with a smiling face.

And shouldst thou wander where the silver shower
Of moonlight falls upon some forest grand,
Whose pillar'd arches by no human hand
Were reared—strange harmonies shall be unwound,
Till "fretted niche," and column'd aisle resound,
While March shall grandly raise in that lone hour,
Te-Deum to our God of Love and Power!

A. L. S.

SNOW-STORM IN APRIL.

I.

SOFT summer airs had whispered of new life
To tiny spires, that dared to peep above
The cold gray soil, at the first breath of love;
The lilac boughs with swelling buds were rife;
Robin and blue-bird in glad song held strife;
Bright daffodils in golden dresses, wove
From stolen sunbeams, left their green-edged cove
And gayly offered Spring their full fresh life;
When lo! a voice that late had feigned "farewell,"
Comes stealing back upon the startled ear,
Bidding presumptuous zephyrs keep their words
Of early wooing from fair buds and birds,
And no sweet vows of new-made love to breathe
So near the icy chaplet he might wreathe.

II.

Softly his chilly breath falls on the air,
And every waving limb and bending bough
Trembles with flaky foliage, pearly fair—
No rival for such bloom will he allow,
No maid of spring such vesture can prepare.
The robin looks ashamed that he should dare
So soon to visit last year's lingering nest,
Now rocking the light snow-drift on its breast;
The daffodil bends meekly 'neath the hood
Of ermine lately tossed on her fair brow;
The lilac says her lover breaks his vow,
And begs him haste to make his promise good.
The laughing sunbeam hears her pleading call,
And throws his genial smile again o'er all.

J. P. B.

I WOULD DRAW NIGH.

"Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to thee."

I WOULD draw nigh, but tell me where?
In forests old and dim?
Or when on lonely mountain top
The soul seems nearer Him?

I would draw nigh! but whither go?
Where purple sunlight falls,
And music sways the charméd air
Within the temple walls?

Oh soul! no outward circumstance
Of time, or state, or place,
Debars the visits of thy God,
If thou dost seek his face—

If thou dost tread the holy ground
With shoes from off thy feet;
And welcome the dear Comforter
Who comes with solace sweet.

It is not thus with absent friends—
Our souls with anguish torn,
May cry, "Would God that they were here!"
On some refulgent morn,

When *they* go forth with gladsome eyes,
Unconscious of our woe,
And learn, at last with sad surprise,
When all too late to know!

And those who from our side have fled
To breathe celestial air,
How should they hear, midst harmonies,
The voice of our despair?

The stifling mountains shut it in,
The waters drown our cry;
No answer from untroubled depths
Of the far-distant sky!

Ah, thus it seems; yet who can say
That friend to friend no more
Returns—returns as embassy,
Fresh from the "Shining shore!"

But this we know, though friends should fail,
God will draw nigh his own;
A loving word, or wish, may bring
An answer from the throne.

And when we tread the sunless vale,
Which Christ before hath trod,
His word of promise shall not fail
While we go home to God.

A. L. S.

THE SEARCH.

I GAZE at morn where rosy-light
The eastern portal faintly tinges,
I scan at noon the far off height,
At sunset where the golden light
With arrowy rays the azure fringes.

Oh could I pierce the clear deep blue!
I fix my hungry gaze upon it:
Its open face, so pure, so true,
I would look through, I would look through,
And seize my treasure just beyond it!

Unpitying sky, be thou my chart,
And yield the secret to my vision!
Within your hold is half my heart,
Why keep me from myself apart?
Why hold my yearning in derision?

"Is it for *Me* this watch you keep?"
Asked a low voice of tenderest sweetness;

"For *Me* you wake while others sleep?
To *Me* your yearning heart would leap?
Seek you in *Me* your soul's completeness?

"For you my soul was darkly tried—
And once you melted at the story—
For you my hands, my feet, my side,
Now bear these scars. For you I died,
That gloom and grief might end in glory.

"I am the Way—look up to Me,
Nor longer blind thine eyes with weeping;
You soon without a veil shall see
What watch, from human weakness free,
Your Shepherd o'er His flock is keeping."

Enough! No more I search the blue,
When death would hide the hearts that love me,
To Him I look whose voice I knew,
Whose pierced hand is still in view
Holding a harp and crown above me.

J. P. B.

I.

CLOUDS.

THIS April day is overcast and dreary,
And while in nature's temple lights grow pale,
Like intonations of a miserere
Comes ever and anon the wind's sad wail;
The stormy petrel settles on the bay,
And eerie wild-birds, on their northward way,
Clear bugle notes are sending on the gale.
Yet blind the eyes that cannot now discern
"Resurgam!" gleam amid the opening fern,
Or read within this daphne's coronal
How flowers waken at the Master's call,
Though cold and darkness seek them to enthrall,
And chilled the soul that has no song of praise
For April days—these sad, symbolic days.

II.

SUNSHINE.

RESURGENT nature springs to rapture new,
No spot so dernful but the sun's bright beams
Illume it; over all the glory streams;
Lights up the purple grakle's dusky hue,
And shows its tints of violet and blue,
Guarding his sombre mate, the starling true;
Unfurls his scarlet wings; in hidden bower
The wood-thrush warbles his entrancing lays;
Arrayed in softened white, aronia seems
Etherial, like the blossoms seen in dreams;
On the hill-side glows the pink May-flower,
Freed from the snow-drifts by the golden rays,
As from white sea-foam comes a fairy dower
Of rosy shells. Ah, bright, symbolic days!

A. L. S.

NOTICED.

JOB XXVIII: 10.

THE rocky bed where winds the crystal stream;
The spotless lily, nodding o'er its brink,
Laughing to see its trembling shadow shrink
From proffered kisses, lest they prove a dream;
The mountain, glinting with the parting gleam
Of sunset; mountain clouds that loosely link
Their gold and crimson, while the dew drops drink;
The eye where love enkindles her bright beam;
The smile that plays upon the sufferer's cheek;
The tear that springs at Sympathy's low call;
The work of kindness for a healing given;
The word of comfort strengthening the weak—
All precious things, without, within, yea all
Are seen by HIM—gifts known and owned of Heaven.

J. P. B.

MAY.

INCOGNITO.

ONE day you'll find her where the waters glide
By alder roots. The wood-bird sings at ease.
Though skies are gray, and drip the woodland trees,
His song is glad, whatever shall betide:
Here, in ecstatic mood, sweet May doth hide.
Often she wanders where anemones
Unfold white petals in the fresh'ning breeze;
Or you may meet her in the forest wide,
Where vines entangle, and where mosses creep;
Her garments sweet with wildwood spicery
Are starred with golden violets. Still sleep,
Through "numbing spells" in drear captivity,
Fair flowers, that wait, in dingle and on steep,
Till May release them with her golden key.

MAY.

CROWNED.

LO! trees and shrubs their gala dress display:
Rhodora hastes her purple robes to wear;
In vestments white the cherry and the pear,
Cornels in light attire with rubies gay,
And peach in rosy garb announce the May!
Can aught beneath the rosy skies compare
For tenderness of tint, and sweetness rare,
With apple-trees in festival array?
The softened flush of the unfolded flower,
And pink buds nestling mid the greenery!
Now red-birds carol in the early hour;
And azure-crested jays on cedar tree,
And blue-birds warbling in the garden bower,
Proclaim, in sprightly songs the jubilee!

A. L. S.

TWO LESSONS.

THE grape-vine's tendrils swayed and swung
and caught
Fast by the fir's long fingers, stiff and green,
Sending its shoots above, around, between,
Till the whole tree, whose strength alone it sought,
Graceful, beneath the drooping vine was seen,
Lost in its mantling robes, a very Queen.

So, thought I, Love, o'er many a sturdy heart
Stiffened and rough through press of carking care,
Comes with her gentle step and graceful air,
And of *her* beauty makes it bear a part;
The roughness vanishes—the beauty grows—
Till what was sterile blossoms as a rose.

One lesson—as I looked another came;
Within some tender clasps of coiling green,
Brown stems, detached, of last years' growth were
seen,

Brittle and lifeless; even "without a name
To live;" yet circled and upborne the same
As though the coil's quick life their own had been.

"Ah me!" I cried, "May not some dead souls *live*,
Upborne, for long, in throbbing arms of love,
That pleading, stretch, and bear them far above
Toward One who Life for Death, alone can give?"
"*Let the dead branches join the Living Vine*,"
Came answer, "And in that day *both* are Mine."

J. P. B.

JUNE.

WELCOME, sweet Princess of the azure eyes!
Sure not to Grecian faith appeared so fair
Blue eye'd Athena, when with zealous care
They kept her festival 'neath summer skies—
The sacred robe, with rich embroideries
By her own fingers wrought, would not compare
In beauty with the garments June doth wear,
Whose living green the emerald's light outvies.
Roses inwreathe them, sprays of eglantine,
The pink azalias, and white lily bells:
Through her soft accents floats the wood-bird's tune,
Inviting us to hidden haunts, where vine
And sweet-ferns cluster in the mossy dells—
Thus hearing thee, we hasten, joyous June!

A. L. S.

TRANSPLANTED.

A HEAP of fresh brown earth lies newly piled
On the soft shaven sward of beauty rare,
Spread out before the window where I gaze.

Scarce have I time to wonder, or to think
Of new-made grave in such a spot as this,
When, trundled by two stalwart gardeners,
A trembling fir is wheeled along the walk
Among the windings of the shaded grounds,
A pyramid of green, and safely set
Within its new-found home; I see the gleam
Of busy spades, as quick they throw the earth
Gently about its roots; one, stopping now
To poise the tree, and give it posture true,
Then stay it, patting firmly the fresh mould.
How meekly went the fir to its new place!
Was there a parting pang, a farewell thought
Of the bright gleaming river, from whose bank,
(Beneath whose sheltering rock, and in the shade

Of broad-armed chestnuts and great tulip-trees,
Festooned with clinging vines of bitter-sweet,
With scarlet arils bursting into gold,)
It drew its first fresh life? It trembles now
As though 'twere full of feeling; near it stands
A score of welcoming friends: a willow first,
A full green fountain rippling in the breeze,
Nods it a mournful welcome; pines stand near,
And white-limbed sycamores extend their arms
In rustling welcome to the stranger fir.
Brave tree! a heart in sympathy shall watch—
And if thy roots refuse not from strange soil
To draw new strength, and thy bright boughs drink in
From the same sunshine thou hast ever loved,
Draughts of new life—heeding the lesson taught,
From thee shall take example, and fit in
With new surroundings to a new-found home.

J. P. B.

IT IS JUNE.

IT is June! it is June! beautiful June!
Come, list to the oriole's gleeful tune;
He has haunted all day the walnut tree,
And merrily, merrily whistles he:
Sweet are the flower-scents wandering by,
Melody breathes in the summer wind's sigh,
Smiles the bright sky, and the sparkling ocean
Quiets the soul with its "measured motion;"
If only our spirits were always in tune
To praise God like thee, June, musical June!

Golden buttercups spangle the green meadow grass,
And fields of the sweet-scented clover we pass,
Precious perfumes fresh leaves of the roses exhale,
The fair convallarias are brightening the vale,
From depths of the dim wood the white cornus glancing,
To touch of the south-wind the willow sprays dancing.

Oaks, maples and alders, the blue sky aboon,
All say to us, June is here! jubilant June!

Bright hum-birds are darting from flower to flower,
And flashing like gems through the garden's green bower,
While the breeze that is stirring the foliage there
Whispers soft as the voice of a child in its prayer;
Near a lichen-lined niche in the old apple tree,
Gentle bluebird is warbling right cheerily;
In its sheltered home by some murmuring rill,
The wood-thrush will sing us a song that shall thrill
Through the list'ning soul, as each magical note
On eventide zephyrs shall tremblingly float;
And then, in the night time, when all, all are still,
Save grasshopper chirping, or late whippoorwill,
Then for a walk 'neath the radiant moon,—
And we'll thank God for June, the beautiful June!

A. L. S.

THREE FEET AROUND.

ON HOOSAC MOUNTAIN.

I'VE laid my bunch of gathered rushes down
(Rough-jointed rushes, sea-green, ringed with black)
Upon the moss-patched rock beside me, where
Above the gurgling brook, beneath the elms
And gnarlèd oaks upon the mountain side.
With book in hand I thought to read awhile,
Waiting my friend the angler's own good time.
Books! Ah, they needs must have a wondrous charm,
If aught in cloth or leather tempt me now!
The music of the brooklet charms my ear;—
The towering mountain, piercing the deep blue
With one bold point, holds eye and mind attent;
And at my feet the shelving rocks speak out
With myriad tongues of brown and green and gold,
Within the radius of three feet round.
The star-moss climbs their sides with velvet foot,

And tiny mushrooms bend from yellow stems
Like side-lamps, capped with round extinguishers
Of buff and brown and orange. Lichens, too,
Grey-green, with tiny chalices; some, round,
Some, like a calla, opening at the side,
Each sparkling with its drop of silver dew.
The pale lobelia, and the golden rod,
Kiss the sweet-fern, and bend in fond embrace,
To welcome the frail sorrel at their root;—
The round three-parted sorrel, each green leaf
Three heart-shaped petals, meeting point to point,
Half hide the yellow blossoms from my sight.

I've plucked a root, and put it in my book—
That's what the book was good for after all!
Helping me hold a little of this wealth
Of beauty, when four walls shall shut me in.
Pressed leaves? Ah, yes, this partridge-berry leaf,
May leave its vine and mountain-shaded home,
And go to form a wreath upon my wall.
And here's a clover. Is it out of place,
Its Gothic trefoil and its crimson top
Among the wilder tangle of the woods?
Ask of the golden dandelion near,

Who utters quick reply,—"*We* have *our* rights
In garden, field, highway or mountain-side."
And I must pluck these strange leaves, melon-shaped,
Thick-covered with white hair; the *Esau* plant;
It may be slander, but I'll call it so.

If I could press these crimson mushrooms, too!
My pencil cannot paint them; one, two, three;
Perfect, and rich, as if from garnet cut,
And held in sunlight. Smooth as pearl a-top,
And underneath carved in rich, even grooves,—
One line, from edge to stem.
And here's a branch
Of beech or maple, dead and fallen down,
But lichen-decked, as if a perfect shower
Of butterflies had chosen it to rest
Upon, when weary in their noon-day flight.
Of this labiate flower
So delicate a purple, I have made
A crescent toward a wreath. It would have been
A circle, (to remind me of the time
When larkspur wreaths were "world and all" to me,)
But that the flowers gave out,—these tiny flowers.

"Ho! Ho!" It is the angler's call; and though
I share his trout, served crisp on tempting plate,
I yet shall say, "I have enjoyed more"
(Whispering this to myself and not to him,)
"Upon the mountain-side in three feet 'round."

J. P. B.

WATER LILIES.

THE pearly clouds are sailing silently
O'er azure sky, and on the lakelet blue
White water lilies float:—No arts, to woo
Those to their crystal homes who will not flee,
Have these our lovely Naiads of the sea,
But with a subtle fragrance will indue
The loyal souls that heed their teachings true,
And keep through tempests sweet tranquility.
Rising from dungeons dark to morning's glow,
With your white robes and coronals of gold,
Ye seem, dear Lilies, faintly to foreshow
That golden glory which the saint descries,
Streaming through depths of troubles manifold,
The compensation bright of Paradise!

A. L. S.

TO THE MUMMY, IN WHOSE HAND LORD LINDSAY FOUND A BULB WHICH PRODUCED A BEAUTIFUL DAHLIA.

A SCORE of centuries thy shrivelled hand
With miser grasp this little bulb did hold,
Withered and dead,—till, placed beneath the mould,
Its hidden germ with beauty did expand,
A living smile upon the desert sand.
Was it *thy* wish, within thy grasp to enfold
This symbol of a bliss to thee untold,
Of life immortal in a better land?
Did'st thou believe, that as this bulb concealed
A hidden life for ages in its breast,
So hidden life in thee should be revealed
To waken in celestial beauty drest?
Then, as the symbol, may thy hope be found,
When for thy waking the last trump shall sound.

J. P. B.

WOOD MOSSES

SOON the leaves shall be withered, the skies
shall be gray.
The trees toss their arms through the long wintry
day,
Then we'll search for the nooks where the wood-
mosses throw
O'er the flowerless earth an emerald glow.
They fear not, they heed not the tempest's wild
power,
But flourish the most in the darksomest hour.

From the brightness hid of the summer heaven
Their beautiful work have the mosses given
To embroider lone spots where the shadows brood,
Nor voices awaken the solitude,
Save where echo calls from her mossy throne*
With a soft reply to the wood-dove's moan,
Or makes response 'neath the darkening sky

To the thrush's song of ecstasy.
Here the gold and the crimson mushrooms glow,
Besprinkled with spots like the flaky snow;
Here the wild birds alight of azure hue,
And carry the mosses away from view,
Where pearly eggs 'mid their emerald sheen
Shall lie deftly concealed by some leafy screen.

O, the chaliced moss when the storm clouds lower
Offers rubied cups to the welcome shower,
Catching drop by drop, till each liquid gem
Shines with changing light like a diadem·
O, the generous moss swells the crystal river,
Where the willows droop and the aspens quiver;
And its velvet folds wrap the acaulon,
Which shall glow like flame in the years to come.

A. L. S.

* "Echo gives answer from her mossy couch."—MILTON.

A BOUQUET.

WHAT unsealed fountain covers me with showers,
Dropping sweet-scented odors all around?
What secret spring hath love's skilled finger found,
To ope a "fount of gardens," throwing flowers
Free as the summer rain on vine-clad bowers?
When pain's strong grasp has gently been unbound,
When light the darkened room again has crowned,
Roses and fuchsias, ye are for such hours!
Precious the breath your perfumed censers hold,
Sweeter your message than all spices smell.
Love! name it not with silver or with gold!
Love! think its value ne'er with gems to tell!
Richer than fragrance from the tender vine,
The whisper that a true heart beats with mine.

J. P. B.

A LENTEN BUTTERFLY.

TO me, ice bound, this Lenten time,
There came as from a sunny clime,
With gold-strewed wing of pearly white,
Resplendent in the noonday light,
As if with sunbeams it would vie,
A fair ethereal Butterfly!

For me, what message, fairy one,
Whilst you are shining in the sun?
Dost say, "I'll soar, for I have wings,
But you, surpassed by meaner things,
Can only look at me and sigh,
'Alas! Alas! I cannot fly!'"

Or, sayest thou, "In Lenten time,
Come, listen to an Easter chime!
I slept through Winter nights and days,
Unvisited by sunny rays;
Yet Resurrection came to me!
And thou hast Immortality!"

Oh Psyche! token that the Spring
Hastens the Easter morn to bring!
Were but thy pinions strong, as fair,
To teach you realms of azure air,
I'd give thee freedom, for thy cheer,
Nor let thee flutter feebly here!

* * * * * *

I raised the sash, a rush, it flew
With upward flight till lost to view—
Whilst in my soul an Easter ray
Sweet sunshine makes, this Lenten day!

A. L. S.

HERE—AND THERE.

I'VE watched fair morning-glory buds open in
snowy bloom;
I've lingered where pure lily bells shook out a sweet
perfume;
I've bent in loving wonder where tuberose buds
unfurl,
Swinging their costly odor from thuribles of pearl.

Tuberose and morning-glory, lilies sun-tipped with
gold,
Think not ye are the rarest flowers, that I have
watched unfold;
Ye mind me of still fairer buds opening to richer
bloom,
Throwing from out their choicer cups a costlier per-
fume.

I've seen the morning-glory fade, the tuberose bow
its head,

The lily petals curl and droop, their grace and beauty
fled;
I've seen the fairest blossoms fall and gently sink
from sight,
And, blinded by my bitter tears, I called it cruel
blight.

Yet now with open eyes I gaze beyond the fading
bloom,
Beyond the chilling winds of earth, beyond the ar-
resting tomb:
Beyond—Oh! Heavenly gardens fair, I speak no
more of blight!
Transplanted safe, I see them all arrayed in spotless
white.

The gracious Lord of that bright land holds for His
own in store
Newness of life, fullness of joy, pleasures for ever-
more. J. P. B.

"AND THEY ALSO WHICH PIERCED HIM."

REV. I. : 7.

WRAPPED in fine linen, odorous with spices,
Take the loved form, so marred and pierced
and bruisèd;
In the new sepulchre within the garden
It will rest sweetly.

Break not the silence by your fruitless weeping—
Wrong is triumphant, death has played the victor;
Roll up the stone and seal the tomb securely
For the pale sleeper!

Ask of the angel who from Heaven descended
Rolling the stone back for the risen Saviour,—
Snow-white His raiment, and His face as lightning,—
Was wrong triumphant?

Ask of the chosen who so soon beheld Him
As in a cloud from out their gaze He vanished:—

Ask of the two in white, who spoke beside them
Words of great promise,

"Why stand ye gazing up into the Heaven?
For this same Jesus who is parted from you
Shall in like manner come again descending
In clouds of glory."

Then shall God call to continent and island,
And from lone cavern, tomb, and ocean recess,
Summon each sleeper quickly to His presence;
All eyes shall see Him.

Ah! *and they* also—what a world of meaning!
Trembling among them, shall be gathered also,
Calling for pity on the rocks and mountains,
"*They who once pierced Him!*"

J. P. B.

DAYBREAK.

AS, in dim woodlands, ere one rosy ray
Calls forth the birdling from its mossy nest,
Some fine, foregoing influence of the day
Allures sweet music from the songster's breast,
And in the dusk it murmurs dreamily;
Thus, oft, ere morning cometh, murmur we
Snatches of song we warble in unrest,
Snatches of olden hymns, whose music quaint
Some martyr fired, or cheered some dying saint—
Lyrics which haunt the universal heart,
Whatever creeds of intellect divide,
Whatever joys elate or ills betide;
So through our lives let the dear music glide,
Till discords die, till shadows shall depart!

A. L. S.

PETRARCH AND LAURA.

I.

FAIR "shut-up valley," beautiful Vaucluse,
Here, in thy rock-girt crescent ever finding
A freshened greenness where the silvery winding
Of Sorgue's clear waters their bright folds unloose,
Say, can the bard and wily god hold truce?
Or to thy secret caves shall Cupid follow,
Haunting the "garden sacred to Apollo,"
In thy lone depths his keenest shafts to use?
Or say if prize of golden violet won,
And laurel wreath that crowns him prince of song,
Can hold the blinded bard with spell as strong
As one fair violet-spangled robe has done?
Or tell if dew-gemmed pansies ever glowed
Radiant as those which Laura's mantle strewed?

II.

Fair "shut-up valley," sweet Vaucluse, ah no!
Thy sunless caverns and thy deepest dingle,
Where the wild olive and the laurel mingle,

Their darkest shadows o'er thy haunts to throw,
Can ne'er shut out that vision's dazzling glow!
Gold locks, brown eyes, and snowy neck commingle,
And bid his very heart's blood burn and tingle,
In every vein, a rapture and a woe—
That passing vision most unearthly fair,
Burned in upon his soul that holy morning,
With light too strong for any after warning
To dim the matin vision of St. Clair.
No fame of coming years can break the spell,
'Till o'er his cold heart tolls the funeral knell.

J. P. B.

"LICHT! LIEBE! LEIBEN!"

LIGHT! LOVE! LIFE!

The inscription upon Herder's tombstone.

THE sunlight's glimmer through the storm-clouds parted,
The moonlight glancing on a restless sea,
Pale star-beams which the eyes of night have darted.
Such, Herder, such the *Light of Earth* to thee!

A rose-tint caught from the rejoicing morn,
One sweet, lone voice from all earth's minstrelsy,
Of smiles and tears a transient rainbow born,
Such, Herder, such the *Love of Earth* to thee!

A search, a yearning for the fair, the true;
Illusive joys which the worn traveler flee;
The poet's rapture, and his anguish too;
Such, Herder, such the *Life of Earth* to thee!

Be happy thou, if it was thine to gain
An entrance to the dwelling-place of light,

Whose holy clearness without earthly stain,
Inwraps a world all beautiful and bright.

And what is Love, 'neath those serener skies,
Where never friend proves worthless or unkind!
Ah! what is Love where beauty never dies!
Where heart to heart responds, and mind to mind!

Below, a plant by chilling winds uptorn,
It blooms with rich, immortal hues above,
And 'mid the radiance of celestial morn,
Glows with his brightness, whose dear name is Love.

And what is Life—eternal life in Heaven!
To love, to serve with strong undying powers,
And find all blessings with our Saviour given,
Our Light, our Love, our Life, *forever* ours.

A. L. S.

"I WILL RANSOM THEM."

HOSEA VIII. : 14.

WHEN the pale messenger, with silent footfall
Enters the chamber where sad watchers wait,
Stops with a breath the crimson current's flowing,
Leaves the still form like marble, and in going
Opes for the soul a strange mysterious gate;

When the fringed lids fall in a darkening shadow,
Over dim eyes, sealed in a dreamless sleep;
When waxen palms some tender hand is folding
Above fair flowers we fain would think them holding,
When reft ones, stricken dumb, nor wail, nor weep;

Say, shall the mourner sit in hopeless sorrow,
Looking on death as an unending sleep?
Saying, For me there is no bright to-morrow,
No torch to light this gloom, that I may borrow;
No voice to comfort in a gloom so deep?

Ah! listen! sounding clear amid the tumult,
The pains, the anguish-throbs we cannot brave,
There comes a Voice, all power and yet all sweetness,
A voice of promise perfect in completeness,
"*I* will redeem from death and from the grave!"

The voice of Him who in this world of sorrow
Trod the red wine-press of God's wrath alone;
Dying himself, that we might rise victorious,
As He from death arose with triumph glorious,
To share with Him the honors of His throne.

J. P. B.

"THE LAST TOKEN."*

I.

SHE is so young, so young! her mien and form
Seem suited to some sweet sequestered place,
She is so slight—would tremble in a storm
Like the fair lily whose soft swaying grace
Is all her own. But her uplifted face
Tells of a purpose none may lightly move,
And speaks of something storms cannot efface;
I think it wears the seal of holy love
And faith, up-staying her all earthly ills above.

II.

No mailéd hero, but a timid maiden;
One little hand leans on the cold hard wall,
While at her feet a rose, with longings laden,
"Last token" that a lover's hand let fall;
And though her figure grows erect and tall,
Just touch'd with sadness seems that earnest glance.
As through the cruel crowd that o'ersees all

She looks her last on one dear countenance;
While fixed *his* eye, unmoved, as in a fearful
trance.

III.

Dainty pink rose, upon the stone floor lying,
Why, such do lovers cull in some sweet glen
Or garden walk, when summer gales are sighing;
But here the close walls show a dolesome den.
O, sight to pale the cheek of sturdy men!
On either hand the stealthy leopards hide,
Sure of their prey; and what the feast has been
The red stains prove. But CHRIST is at her side,
And they are safe indeed who with their LORD
abide.

IV.

And I am glad the artist gave her so,
Without a trace of triumph on her brow:
Palms for the future; joy enough, I trow,
Though surely to her death she goeth now,
Timid yet firm; for I remember how
GOD chooseth weak things to confound the strong:
"We can do all things," trusting saints avow,

"Through CHRIST that strengthens." Thus the victor's song
Shall glorify His name, and His dear praise prolong.

A. L. S.

*A picture by MAX at the Loan Exhibition, Academy of Design, N. Y., 1876, represents the exquisitely beautiful face of a young Christian martyr, in the arena, about to be sacrificed by leopards, one of which approaches her from the open, blood-stained window leading to his den. Her lover from above, not seen by the spectator, has just thrown down a rose, which lies at her feet. Her uplifted face tells that her farewell look is for him.

"NO IDOL IN THE HAND—NO IDOL IN THE HEART."

BRIGHTLY the sun's last glowing beams
Crimsoned his native sea,
As slowly on the Indian shore
A Parsee bent the knee.
Devotion in his upturned face
Seemed strangely blent with fear;
He knelt, 'till 'neath the fading wave
His God should disappear.

Then tremulous he rose and walked
That pilgrim-trodden strand,
And, bowing, with his finger traced
His thought upon the sand:
"God"—'twas the burden of his thought—
"My God, and must we part?
Shall thy bright beams no more receive
The homage of my heart?

"Has all my worship been in vain?
My soul believes it true—

Blest teachers of the living God
I henceforth go with you.
Thou Sun—so long the God before
Whose glory I have bowed,
Farewell! when thou again shalt rise
No doubts my soul shall cloud.

"The God who *made thee* calls me now!
With thee as God I part;
No idol henceforth in my hand—
No idol in my heart!"

* * * * * *

Along the shore of memory's sea,
Where high the dark waves rolled,
A stricken mother bowed in grief
That would not be controlled.
"He was my own, my only one,
My life with his was blent;
I could not for a moment think
He was a treasure *lent*.

"When from his cheek the crimson hue
Grew pale as fades the leaf;

When from his eye the light withdrew,
My soul owned no relief.
'My God,' I cried, 'and wilt thou not
My life's best treasure spare?'
There was no answering voice of love,
And all was deep despair.

"'My God,' again I cried, 'and can
A worshipper like me,
Who can permit an angel child
To blot out joy in Thee;
Can *such* a worshipper still claim
In thy pure bliss a part?
Henceforth no idol in my hand,
No idol in my heart!'"

God is enough the mourner sings,
When trust succeeds to doubt;
God is enough, the Parsee finds
Though suns be blotted out.
Oh, solemn as the prayer may be,
'Tis of my life a part;
No idol in my hand henceforth,
No idol in my heart.

J. P. B.

"NON OMNIS MORIAR!"

THE winds, to-night, the forest pines, are singing
The same wild song with which the woods were ringing
Through the long nights of centuries gone by,
And merged in depths of dread eternity;
Still moans the sea and sings the river still,
Wandering and warbling at its "own wild will;"
And now, as then, with aspirations high,
Man singeth to himself, "I shall not die!
Though I go hence, I shall not wholly die!"

Through sounding galleries of Time's ancient fane,
Floats onward, onward, some symphonious strain,
From out the Past, heroic souls are calling
Through their sweet accents, on the charmed ear falling.
Long since they lived, and wrought their life-work well;

Long since they heard the voice of Azrael,
Like curfew-bell in the dim eventide
Calling to slumber, for the day hath died,
To quench the cheerful blaze, put out the light,
Say to the household group, "Good-night! good night!"
And still each whispered with the latest sigh,
"I shall not die! I shall not wholly die!"

Thus sings the Poet, when his words have power
To gild the storm-cloud of some threatening hour,
To help the mourner in his misery,
"I shall not die! I shall not wholly die!"
Thus says the Artist, when each radiant hue
With love of beauty doth some soul imbue,
When the fair scenes that haunt his inner vision,
Steeped in the warmth and tints of life elysian,
Wake up some soul to thought and purpose high,
"I shall not die! I shall not wholly die!"

Thus saith the Christian, in his mortal anguish,
"I shall revive, though early life will languish.
Where is thy sting, O Death? Thy victory, Grave?

Jesus, the Victor, shall be strong to save."

* * * * * * * *

Then fold the hands, and calmly close the eye,
He shall not die! He shall not wholly die!

A. L. S.

BEGINNING TO SINK.

A SHIP was tossing in the wind
Upon the billowy sea,
And fearful mariners looked out
On storm-rocked Galilee.
When lo upon the heaving floor,
Across the swelling wave
A form approached with fearless step;
A friend drew near to save.

"It is a spirit!" quick they cried—
Each heart with fear dismayed;
"Be of good cheer!" a voice replied,
"'Tis I, be not afraid."
The sanguine Peter heard, and called,
"Lord, bid me come to thee!"
"Come!" and he sprang from out the ship
Upon the rocking sea.

The silvery floor beneath his feet
Seemed opening for his grave,

Faithless, and sinking, loud he cried
Unto his Lord, to save.
How good the grasp of that firm hand,
With trouble girt about!
And still we ask, as Christ then asked,
"Oh! wherefore didst thou doubt?"

J. P. B.

THE FRINGED GENTIAN.

WHILE Nymphœa's locked in charméd sleep,
The azure lakelet under,
Nor shall awake till welcome Spring
Each mystic bond will sunder
Lobelia vies with Golden-rod,
And shines in scarlet splendor;
And tarries still the Gentian meek
With hue so sweetly tender.
O Gentian, why thy fring'd lids clos'd?
And why thy garb thus sober,
When others wear the livery gay,
Of red and gold October?
Dost think that o'er thy satin folds
Some late and careless rover,
Some homeless bee, in rueful plight,
Some wandering fly shall hover?
Hath August's purple hydromel
Which tints thy veins so finely,

Entranced thee with its magic spell,
That thou dost dream supinely?
Or, art thou musing of the sky,
Its rich blue tints reflecting,
With hues that deck the mountain high,
All gayer charms rejecting?
Come storm, come calm, dear Gentian, thou
Need take no thought of morrow,
The frost may bite some chilly night,
But thou no care wilt borrow:
Oh, Gentian blue, impearl'd with dew,
And bath'd in moonlight mellow,
When thou shalt rest on Earth's calm breast,
'Mid crimson leaves and yellow,
I'll say, with grace she fill'd her place,
And when her father bid her,
Without vain care she perish'd there,
And thus will I "consider."

A. L. S.

THE MIMOSA.

I'VE watched the frail Mimosa's bud
Burst gently through the yielding clay,
Its feathery leaves of palest green
Unfolding to the opening day.

The seed that slept beneath the mould,
Heard the low Zephyr's plaintive voice,
Felt through the earth the sunbeam's kiss,
And bade them in its birth rejoice.

I've seen its leaflets, (just before
In graceful beauty wide outspread,)
Quivering and curling 'neath a touch,
Sink slowly to their Earthy bed.

And so when Sorrow's darkest shade
Shrouded a heart in sudden night,
I've seen the germ of faith expand,
Break through the gloom and gain the light.

Alas, when all again was fair,
I've seen a word that spirit wound,
When lo! each shrinking tendril fell
Silent and withering to the ground.

J. P. B.

"AT EVENING TIME IT SHALL BE LIGHT."

"It has sometimes been, as in that beautiful story, that the last steps, before the dark river was reached, lay through the land Beulah, * * * * and yet the feet may be dipped in the chill river, before the heavenly light has shone upon the face."—*Graver Thoughts of a Country Parson.*

I.

IT shall be light! Though here the "silver lining,"
The solemn splendor of our midnight skies,
The crimson glory when the sun's declining;
Yet oft the spirit turns its eager eyes
To the calm brightness of celestial day,
Ah! when, she asks, will shadows flee away,
And all be light?

II.

Though, like the wood thrush, when the days are dreary,
She sings her sweetest in her deepest gloom,

Or softly breathes the plaintive miserere
As the crushed anthemis exales perfume,
She yearns to be where perfect spirits dwell,
And where the notes of Hallelujah swell,—
Where all is light!

III.

It shall be light! Oh, Christian it may be
That, ere thy feet shall touch the bridgeless stream,
All night and day the sun shall shine for thee
Where the clear rivulets of Beulah gleam;
Yet, should thy sun in gloom descend the skies,
Fear not! For thee eternal morn shall rise—
It shall be light!

A. L. S.

COMMUNION OF THE THREE PASTORS OF ZURICH, APRIL 1525.

NO sacred altar there, no mystic rite,
No holy wafer, which the form should shroud
Of Him they worshiped; not within a cloud
Of perfumed incense; but with faith's pure light
Beaming above the gloom of Papal night,
That noble band their new allegiance vowed,
As round the table of their Lord they bowed,
By *faith* communing—asking not for sight.
No cup of burnished gold received the wine,
Or silver platter held the symbol bread;
They meekly took the elements divine,
Their board with wooden plate and goblet spread,
And there, in living union with their Vine.
Sweet peace and holy joy on all were shed.

J. P. B.

THE SOMBER SAIL.

WHAT glitter of noon-tide, what glories of night,
Surpass this encrimsoned, enrapturing light,
Rolling in on the rippled bay?
Oh, these magical hues have a subtle power,
In the silence and shade of this sunset hour,
Unknown to the dazzling day!

Into the bay with its white sails spread,
Glorified in this evening red,
Wafted by zeyhyrs free,
The fair ship glides on her shining track,
And tossing the spray in diamonds back,
She hastes to the wider sea.

* * * * * * * *

White as the down on the eider's breast,
Bright as the foam on the billow's crest,
When we saw her from afar;

And now, at last, in that line of light
Where the golden sky and sea unite,
She fades as the evening star.

What follows her track, like an ominous dream,
Or that dolorous boat on the gloomy stream
Once bound for the "sunless shore"?
All darkly this came on our wondering view,
And somber its sails in the roseate hue
As those sable ones of yore.

* * * * * * * *

You were saying, friend, with your usual grace,
"*Not changing its texture, but changing its place*
Shall whiten this canvas dark;"
See! into the brightness she carries the stain,
And the last rays of sunset are striving in vain
To illumine the Shadowy Bark!

A. L. S.

THE HIDING PLACE.

"And a Man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest."—ISAIAH xxxii: 2.

"The keenest winds that blow over all lonely places, whether lonely hights or lonely flats."—ROBERTSON.

NO shelter from the wind,
Sweeping the level blackness of the moor!
The chilling wind, that pierces through the soul,
Whilst the unpitying rain
Drenches the long reach of the mossy waste!
No shelter from the wind,
Rushing from Scythian wilds,
Over the dolesome steppe!
And through the prairies lone and treeless stretch,
When bends the sear grass 'neath the cutting blast,
No shelter from the wind!

No covert from the storm
Meeting the traveler lost on mountain hights!
When forceful lightning reddens the grim crags,

And shows destruction near!
Wrapped in the black folds of some thund'rous cloud,
He finds 'mid raging wind,
He finds 'neath pelting hail,
No refuge from the storm!
God pity wanderers lost on nights like these!
And give all lambs missing from shepherd's fold
A covert from the storm!

But O, than heath more black,
Than fen more false, than deserts drear more wild,
Are the bleak places, where the tempted sees
No shelter from the storm!
Where doleful creatures roam and specters fright;
And there are gloomy hights,
Where keener lightnings flash,
Where louder thunders roll!
Alas! on wind-swept flats and steeps like these,
What power shall give the haunted human soul
A covert from the storm?

O, hearken, tempted one,
Ages ago 'twas told a Man shall be
As hiding place from wind—covert from storm;

And in due time One came!
Stronger than storm, He ruled the raging wind,
He trod the desert lone,
He faced the tempter's power,
Was tried and overcame!
A prayer—the glance of faith—and He is near!
Immanuel His name—our shelter from the blast,
Our refuge from the storm!

A. L. S.

GARNERED.

BLEAK wintry winds had bared the shivering trees,
And whirled their brown dead leaves to snow-filled graves;
'All summer's treasures locked in secret caves,'
I mourning said, 'and nothing left to please
But winter's ruthless grasp must sternly seize—'
When lo! beneath a sheltered bank there waves,
Sweetly unconscious of the storm it braves,
One crimson-lidded daisy. A heart's ease,
Green-leaved at root, and with a double bloom
Of purple flowerets, to the daisy smiled.
Fair flowers, ye shall no longer brave the wild,
But sheltered safe with me breathe sweet perfume:
So oft doth God to his dear children say,
'Long have you smiled through storms, come bloom with me alway."

J. P. B.

THE PEACE OF THE MOUNTAINS.

"The mountains shall bring peace to the people."—PSALMS lxxii : 2

TO him who, dwelling by the restless deep,
Has shared its wild commotion day by day,
And felt its moaning voice, though midnight sleep
O'er his wrapt soul had sway ;

When he shall seek the purple heights again,
And find from vexing thoughts a sweet surcease,
How softly on his spirits falls that strain,—
"The mountains shall bring peace!"

"The covenant of God's peace doth still remain,"
He saith, recalling some dear word of hope,
When golden sunbeams after chilling rain
Brighten the mountain slope.

Clearly against the azure sky they trace
The finest spray ; they pierce the darksome grot ;
Whilst airy footsteps of the rainbow grace
Some unfrequented spot.

How can he cherish an unworthy thought
In presence of these everlasting hills?
Calmness and strength unto his soul are brought,
And God the silence fills.

Be still my soul! offer thine incense too,
When vapor-wreaths from these grand altars rise,
Reflect thy God, as mountain meres the blue
Of the o'er-bending skies.

He is so near and earth so far away,
I bid all lesser aspirations cease;
My God! Thy word of promise* is my stay;
Thy mountains bring me peace.

A. L. S.

* "As the mountains are around about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even forever."

THE OCTOBER SNOW.

THE green leaf lies upon the snow;
The yellow leaf, the purple leaf,
The scarlet-dashed, gold-bordered leaf—
Lie side by side upon the snow.

The imprint of the frozen leaf,
Sun-kissed and blown from where it fell,
Shows ice-veined outline where it fell—
Frail imprint of the frozen leaf.

Our lives are brief—like leaves on stone
Ice-veined—and melting in the sun
We pass like snow before the sun
Scarce held in memory by a stone!

The icy grasp of winter yields,
Green leaves return—sweet flowerets bloom—
And we again with Spring shall bloom
For Death to Life Immortal yields!

J. P. B.

A NOVEMBER PICTURE.

I.

THE envious frost hath stolen the royal coat
Rich-hued, wherewith fond Autumn had arrayed
The kingly mountain with so grand parade
Of gold and crimson; yet 'tis decked, I note,
With wealth on which a miser's eye might gloat,
In silver robe, with glittering pearls inlaid.
The brilliant clouds that round the sunset played,
Now fading, faintly round his bright crest float.
The fields are not all brown—a silvery sheen
Glitters and gleams upon their bosoms bare;
The oriole's nest swings from the maple bough;
A birdlike leaf, still fluttering there, is seen;
The old elm waves its boughs with graceful care;
Cold beauties linger o'er the landscape now.

II.

When grief hath stolen from joy the golden flush
Which youth's bright morning had so richly crowned,
She looks to find all bleak and bare around;
But lo! *sweet memories* o'er the spirit rush,
Like south winds in late autumn. Grief may crush
Full many a spring-nursed bud, but cannot wound
The root of joy. There yet may bud and blush,
With a fresh tint of beauty, many a flower
That, like the crimson clouds which softly rest
On icy mount, shall cheer with rosy bloom.
Some leaf of hope, with frost-defying power,
Shall ever cling to the deserted nest,
Some joys be left to light November gloom.

J. P. B.

SILENCE.

"MY SOUL WAITETH UPON GOD."

Psalm LXII. : 1. The marginal reading is—"*My soul keepeth silence unto God.*")

MY soul keeps silence unto Thee, my God!
As lutes are silent till the master's power
Wakes to sweet music each responsive chord.
A refuge art Thou in the darkest hour,
And fondly trusting where I cannot see,
Would I keep silence, oh my God, to Thee!

Thus on my spirit shall repose descend,
Like the deep hush that on the forest falls,
Lulling the birdling which its shades befriend,
While stillness steals throughout the leafy halls,
Until at last the genial summer shower
Shall send a richer life through bud and flower.

Or as in moments that precede the dawn,
When seas are silent, and the winds are calm,
Not now the flush and triumph of the morn,
Yet is the air enriched with choicest balm;

Nor shall dark shadows from the streamlet bar
The gentle radiance of some lingering star;

But soon the joyous birds, in concert sweet,
Shall hail the coming of the glorious sun;
His royal rising the glad waters greet;
Each sends on high a fervent orison.
The wakened wind an argosy shall be,
To bear its treasures o'er the shining sea.

So in the morning twilight of the soul,
Would I keep silence, oh my God! to Thee,
That thus some starry promise may unroll,
Its beauty and its brilliancy for me;
And from my mind, with all its various powers,
Shall rise sweet incense as the breath of flowers,
Till God's own glory gilds the glowing hours!

A. L. S.

"I PASS THIS WAY BUT ONCE."

THIS way!
Where sweet-breathed violets usher in the Spring,
Where Summer roses spicy fragrance bring,
Where Autumn blooms in richest colors blend,
Where Winter's snowy robes their beauty lend,
I pass this way but once!

This way!
Where melting love looks out from beaming eyes,
Where Sorrow's sympathy brings glad surprise,
Where mothers, with full souls their children press,
Where little hearts give back the fond caress,
I pass this way but once!

This way!
Where joy, the purest, richest, most sincere,
Is soonest followed by the scalding tear;

Where the warm crimson tide a breath may chill,
Where swift disease the rapid pulse may still,
I pass this way but once!

This way!
Where "silent cities" ever grow apace,
Beside each noisy town whose beauty, grace
And strength are taxed the noiseless growth to aid,
With stern demand that may not be gainsayed,
I pass this way but once!

This way!
Where words of tenderness may prove a balm,
Where *look* of love the grief-tossed heart may calm,
Where 'neath the *Rock* the sin-sick soul may hide,
Where Prayer the gate of pearl throws open wide,
I pass this way but once!

This way!
Where pilgrim steps may never backward turn;
Sweet friends, shall not our souls within us burn
To scatter, as we go, what good we may,
And lay up treasures for a brighter day;
We pass this way but once!

J. P. B.

"GIVE ME GREAT THOUGHTS!"

Herder, when about to die, exclaimed with great disquiet, "*Give me great thoughts!*"

GIVE me great thoughts! have I not felt the power
Which nature holds, life's fever to control,
When with her starry eyes in some still hour
She seemed to read the secrets of my soul,
And evil thoughts and sombre fled away,
As spectres vanish at the dawn of day?
Give me great thoughts!

Give me great thoughts!—the holy and the high!
Since nature's teachings have to me been given,
And lofty mountain and the solemn sky
And silent night, have raised my hopes to Heaven;
And I have heard the voice of God with awe,
In rolling thunder, or in ocean's roar;
Forbid! Forbid! sweet Nature, I should be
A truant scholar, and unworthy thee!
Give me great thoughts!

Give me great thoughts!—lest the dear spell be
broken,
Which sweetly charms the spirit from unrest;
For lofty beings to my heart have spoken—
Have left their works to me—a rich bequest!
And they have made my soul a holy shrine;
Guard well thy precious trust! oh spirit mine!
Guard their great thoughts!

The thoughts which they the dead of long ago,
The dwellers of Eternity, have given;
They who have toiled, have suffered here below,
How sweet their rest! how great their joy in
Heaven!
And still on earth they live—with them I smile;
I weep with them, and hear them speak the while
Of a bright country, where they weep no more;
Oh, holy dead! oh, gifted ones of yore!
Give *more* great thoughts!

Great thoughts while living! let some angel stir
The hidden fount of thought within my soul,
Till through my efforts some poor sufferer
From sin's dread sickness be at last made whole;

Till many a child of grief is brought to Thee,
Through thy sweet influence, Saviour, blessing me
With holy thoughts.

Give me great thoughts when dying! when for me
Earth's flowers bloom, earth's voices charm no more;
When to my soul speaks vast Eternity,
As I stand silenced by the billow's roar,
Though night shuts in, and all is dark and wild,
Still with great thoughts upstay thy shrinking child
Oh Saviour! who the path of death hath trod,
Give me great thoughts ere I go home to God:
Give me great thoughts!

A. L. S.

ROBBING THE WOODS.

SWEET blossoms of the mountain,
Of forest, glade and dell
I cannot let you all remain
In the homes you grace so well.

I rob the rocky benches
Of the nodding columbine,
And its gold and scarlet chalices
With feathery fern entwine.

These fair azaleas, blushing
With wealth of rosy bloom,
Shall from their swaying censers
Shake perfume through my room.

I steal the purple crow-foot
Nodding in glad assent,
Revealing long-spurred violets
Under its leafy tent.

This bishop's-cap I pilfer
From its bed of starry moss;
Its slender raceme shall for me
Its snowy mitres toss.

Here 'neath a clump of birches
Giving me glad surprise,
A pair of lady's slippers greet
My blossom-hunting eyes.

And here I steal an acorn
From the damp and chilly earth,
To bid it tell the secret
Of the mighty forest's birth,

As I watch its tender plumule
Reach upward in my glass,
While its fibrous rootless float below
A white and tangled mass.

So I make a free confession,
And scruple not to tell
How I plunder vale and mountain
And the cool and mossy dell.

J. F. B.

MAY.

A RUSH last night of pinions sweeping by
And Winter pass'd with a grim retinue!
He holds his court where Arctic skies imbue
The flashing snows with Tropic brilliancy,
And orange morns with crimson sunsets vie.
The wizard-king has left his daughters three,
And grants to each awhile the regency;
His daughters three, like those our Shakespeare drew:
Fierce are the eyes of March, as Goneril's eyne;
April like Regan, falser is than fair;
True as Cordelia's smiles, May's glances shine;
Ermine he left with those, and jewels rare,
But to his youngest, May, gives power to free
The flowers they leave in drear captivity.

A. L. S.

WATCH FOR THE DOVE.

OPEN the window and take in the dove
She flies to the ark
With a weary wing;
O'er the waters dark
Not a living thing,
Not a shrub, not a bough,
Not a spray of green;
No cradle of rest
Has the wanderer seen;
Take in the dove.

Open the window and take in the dove;
She flies to the ark
With a lighter wing,
She is coming a message
Of hope to bring,
A leaf from the olive,
Sweet token of love;

Green tree-tops are waving
The waters above;
Take in the dove.

Open the window and watch for the dove;
With a joyful wing
She has cleft the air,
Sunshine and gladness
Everywhere;
She returns no more,
For a world of green
In fresh bright beauty
The bird has seen.
We may bid farewell
To the storm-tried ark,
It will float no more
O'er the waters dark;
Turn from the window and open the door,
Follow the dove and return no more;
Follow the dove!

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